DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 328 326 JC 910 118

AUTHOR	Adams, Dorcas M.; Rowzie, Gay
TITLE	Continuing Student Survey Results, Fall 1990.
INSTITUTION	Midlands Technical Coll., Columbia, SC.
PUB DATE	90
NOTE	14p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Ancillary School Services; College Planning; Community Colleges; Comparative Analysis; *Participant Satisfaction; *Paying for College; Program Evaluation; *Student Attitudes; Student Behavior; *Student Characteristics; *Student Employment; Technical Institutes; Two Year Colleges; *Two Year College Students
IDENTIFIERS	Midlands Technical College SC

ABSTRACT

In fall 1990, a sample of continuing students in upper-division courses at Midlands Technical College (MTC) was surveyed to gather information about students' demographic characteristics; employment status; evaluation of MTC's marketing materials; source of income for education; reasons for selecting MTC; evaluation of class scheduling; and evaluation of MTC services. Continuing students in 62 selected classes were surveyed, resulting in 627 usable surveys. Study findings, including comparisons with a similar study conducted in 1988, indicated the following: (1) 70% of the respondents were unmarried, 74% were white, and 56% were female; (2) 87% planned to return to return to MTC the following quarter; (3) 37% were employed full-time, and an additional 45% worked part-time; (4) 72% of the 1990 respondents and 63% of the 1988 respondents rated the MTC catalog as "very helpful"; (5) in both 1988 and 1990, the top three sources of student funding for college were personal income (57%), family income (33%), and family savings (21%); (6) 70% of the respondents indicated that a major reason for attending MTC was the college's course offerings, while 67% cited the college's low cost; and (7) in both 1988 and 1990, over 85% of the students expressed satisfaction with admissions, registration, and advisement. (JMC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED328326

CONTINUING STUDENT

SURVEY RESULTS

FALL 1990

Dorcas M. Adams
Gay Rowzie

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. M. Adams

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

SC910118

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

Midlands Technical College
Columbia, South Carolina

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
CONTINUING STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Survey results for Fall 1990 were analyzed for 627 students who completed the Continuing Student Survey. The majority of the students were unmarried (70 percent), white or Caucasian (74 percent), female (56 percent), in their early twenties and planning to return to MTC in the Winter quarter (87 percent).

- ☞ Overall student satisfaction with academic advisement, instruction, course content, class size, and occupational preparation was positive. All categories exceeded the targeted standard of 85 percent.

- ☞ The level of satisfaction with Student Support Services, such as admissions, assessment, registration, and advisement remained virtually unchanged from Fall 1988 to Fall 1990, with the level of satisfaction exceeding the targeted standard of 85 percent. The only area in Career Services that did not meet the standard was the provision of information concerning career/job opportunities (82 percent). In Fall 1990 student satisfaction with services in Financial Aid fell to 75 percent, a 10 percent drop in satisfaction from the 1988 Continuing Student Survey.

- ☞ Only 35 percent of students responding to the Fall 1990 survey said that there were enough sections of required courses offered that could be comfortably fit into their schedule. Thirty-four percent indicated that there were not enough sections and 30 percent indicated that only in some areas are there enough sections of required courses. Less than half of the students (40 percent) indicated that required courses were scheduled throughout the day. Most students (76 percent) found it difficult (46 percent) or somewhat difficult (30 percent) to schedule classes in different subject areas because they seem to be offered at the same time.

- ☞ In Fall 1990, the most frequently selected reasons (70 percent; 67 percent) for attending MTC, were that the College offered courses in which students were interested in enrolling, and the low cost for attending. Conversely, 92 percent of the students surveyed indicated the advise of a high school counselor and the need to be with friends (90 percent) were not factors in their selection of MTC.

- ☞ Students rated the MTC catalog (72 percent) and the course schedule (78 percent) as "very helpful". Department or program brochures and general information or overview booklets received much lower "very helpful" ratings (39 percent and 35 percent).

- ☞ Of those students surveyed in Fall 1990, 82 percent reported that they work either full or part-time, an increase from 79 percent of the students surveyed in Fall 1988. More than half of the students surveyed, 51 percent, stated that they work from 20 to 40 hours per week. The top three major sources of income for education in Fall 1990 were personal income (57 percent), family income (33 percent) and family savings (21 percent). This distribution holds true in the results of the Fall 1988 data. In both years, Social Security benefits, scholarships, employer reimbursement, and veteran's benefits were the lowest major sources of income.

INTRODUCTION

A sample of continuing students in upper division courses were surveyed during the fall quarter of 1990 in order to receive feedback that could be useful in improving programs and services to students. The surveys were distributed to continuing students in 62 selected classes on the Airport and Beltline campus'. Forty-five of the classes met during the day and 17 were evening classes. Thirty-five different course content areas were represented, including courses in the major as well as general education. The result was 627 usable Continuing Student Surveys.

The sampling technique employed was sufficient to produce a representative sample of continuing students. Representativeness, not size, is the essential characteristic needed to make inferences from the sample to the student population of interest. The number of students responding to the survey (627) produced a sample that was of adequate size for analysis.

The same sampling methodology was used to produce the responses from the students surveyed in Fall 1988. Where appropriate, comparisons between Fall 1990 and Fall 1988 results are reported.

RESULTS

The Continuing Student Survey asked students for information, ratings, or opinions in seven broad areas. These included:

(1) Student Characteristics,
(2) Employment Information,
(3) Evaluation of MTC Marketing Materials,
(4) Source of Income for Education,
(5) Reasons for Selecting MTC,
(6) Evaluation of Class Scheduling, and
(7) Evaluation of MTC Services.

It should be noted that although most students completed the survey, not all students responded to all questions. This occurred for several questions assessing the helpfulness of marketing materials and for all the questions evaluating financial aid, career services, and assessment.

Student Characteristics

A summary of the characteristics of the continuing students who responded to the survey is presented in Table 1. The majority of the students were unmarried (70 percent), white or Caucasian (74 percent), female (56 percent), in their early twenties and planned to return to MTC next quarter (87 percent).

TABLE 1
STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

GENDER

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
Female	346	56	479	62
Male	272	44	288	38

MARTIAL STATUS

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
Married	176	28	208	27
Separated	10	2	18	2
Unmarried	431	70	544	71

ETHNIC GROUP

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	4	1	10	1
Asian	13	2	11	1
Black or Afro American	132	21	203	28
Hispanic	3	1	8	1
White or Caucasian	458	74	528	69
Non-Resident	5	1	3	--

INTENTION TO ATTEND NEXT QTR

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	535	87	698	90
No	38	6	28	4
Undecided	44	7	42	6

Employment Information

A large percentage (82 percent) of MTC's continuing students work either full-time (37 percent) or part-time (45 percent). Some students (12 percent) indicated that although they are not currently working they do desire a job. A majority of the students (63 percent) work more than 20 hours a week and 40 percent work more than 30 hours a week. A slight increase from 37 percent to 41 percent is noted in the percentage of students working more than 30 hours per week from Fall 1988 to Fall 1990.

TABLE 2
EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

EMPLOYMENT STATUS:

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
Part-Time	275	45	347	46
Full-Time	227	37	255	33
Want One	73	12	96	13
Don't Need	38	6	62	8

HOURS PER WEEK EMPLOYED:

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
0 - Occasionally	106	17	151	20
1 - 10 Hours	27	4	27	3
11 - 20 Hours	90	15	138	18
21 - 30 Hours	143	23	163	22
31 - 40 Hours	167	28	182	24
Over 40 Hours	7	13	97	13

Evaluation of MTC Marketing Materials

Students were asked to rate the helpfulness of certain printed materials they may have received from MTC. In Fall 1990 and Fall 1988, the majority rated as "very helpful" the MTC catalog (72 percent to 63 percent) and the course schedule (78 percent to 72 percent). Only 2 percent indicated that these two publications were not helpful.

Department or program brochures and general information or overview booklets received much lower "very helpful" ratings (39 percent and 35 percent) in Fall 1990. Most of the students who responded rated them "somewhat helpful" (48 percent and 50 percent). The same trend was evident in the 1988 responses. These figures need to be viewed with some caution. Only about half of the students (330) rated the department or program brochure and the general information or overview booklet. This may indicate that the students do not remember these materials, never obtained them, or do not know what they are.

Source of Income for Education

Students were given a list of sources of income and asked to indicate which were a "major source", a "minor source", and "not a source" of income for their education.

The top three major sources of income in 1990 were personal income (57 percent), family income (33 percent) and family savings (21 percent). These were followed by student loans (14 percent) and educational grants (13 percent). Social Security benefits (2 percent), scholarships (4 percent), employer reimbursement (6 percent) and veteran's benefits (7 percent) were the lowest major sources of income. These results are similar to responses to these same questions in 1988, with the exception of educational grants, where the response rate was 13 percent in 1990 and 20 percent in 1988.

Reasons for Selecting MTC

Students were given a list of reasons for electing to attend MTC and asked to indicate which were a "major reason", a "minor reason", and "not a reason" that they selected MTC.

More than half of the students indicated that a major reason for attending MTC was the college's courses offerings, low cost, and their ability to work while attending. Slightly less than half indicated that a major reason for attending was the good academic reputation of MTC and the good chance of personal success. Very few students indicated that the advice of a high school counselor, the desire to be with their friends, social atmosphere, advise of parents, or the availability of financial aid were major reasons for attending MTC. Table 3 provides the actual figures and percentages from the two surveys.

TABLE 3
REASON FOR SELECTING MTC

MAJOR REASON:

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988			Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%
Offered Courses I Wanted	419	70	505	69	Availability of Fin. Aid	82	14	127	18
Low Cost for Attending	403	67	439	62	Advise of Parents	49	8	82	12
Could Work While Attending	316	53	349	49	Social Atmosphere	25	4	32	5
Good Academic Reputation	287	48	310	44	Advice of H. S. Counselor	13	2	31	4
Good Chance of Personal Success	270	45	376	52	To Be With Friends	10	2	16	2

Evaluation of Class Scheduling

Students were asked to respond to four questions which addressed the issue of scheduling and availability of classes at times which are convenient for them (see Table 4).

TABLE 4
EVALUATION OF CLASS SCHEDULING

PREFERRED TIME FOR CLASSES

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
Morning	319	55	487	66
Weekend	46	8	29	4
Afternoon	103	18	123	17
Combination	5	1	2	--
Evening	94	16	72	10
No Preference	13	2	24	3

SUFFICIENCY OF SECTIONS OF REQUIRED COURSES

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	220	35	355	46
No	213	34	203	27
Some	188	30	205	27

REQUIRED COURSES SCHEDULED THROUGHOUT DAY

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	242	40	366	49
No	147	24	131	18
Some	214	36	248	33

DIFFICULTY IN SCHEDULING CLASSES IN DIFFERENT SUBJECT AREAS

	Fall 1990		Fall 1988	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	280	46	264	35
No	146	24	245	32
Some	188	30	247	33

Respondents in both years of the survey indicated that they preferred to attend morning classes (55 percent in 1990 and 66 percent in 1988).

A significantly smaller percentage of students (35 percent to 46 percent), said that there were enough sections of required courses offered so that they could be comfortably fit into their schedule in 1990 as compared to 1988. In Fall 1990, 34 percent indicated that there were not enough sections and 30 percent indicated that only in some areas are there enough sections of required courses. Less than half (40 percent) of the 1990 students indicated that required courses were scheduled throughout the day. About a fourth of the students (24 percent) indicated that required courses are not scheduled throughout the day.

Most students (76 percent) in Fall 1990 found it difficult (46 percent) or somewhat difficult (30 percent) to schedule class in different subject areas because they seem to be offered at the same hour. This compares to 68 percent of the students in 1988 indicating difficulty in scheduling classes.

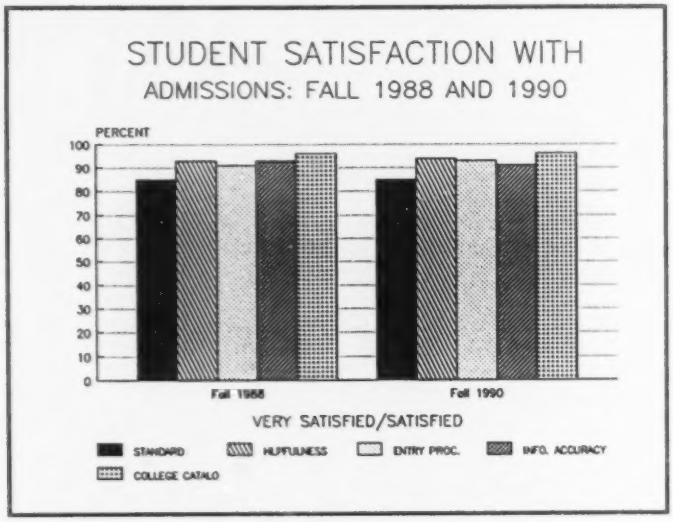
Evaluation of MTC Services

Students were asked to evaluate seven departmental areas of the college by indicating their degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with specifically listed services provided by those departments. Students could also indicate that they had "no opinion" about a service of a particular departmental area. The directions stated that they were to respond to only those items of which they had some knowledge. Since a heavy percentage of "no opinions" tends to skew the percentage which indicate satisfied students, "no opinion" responses are not calculated into the results. Table 5, lists responses for all services.

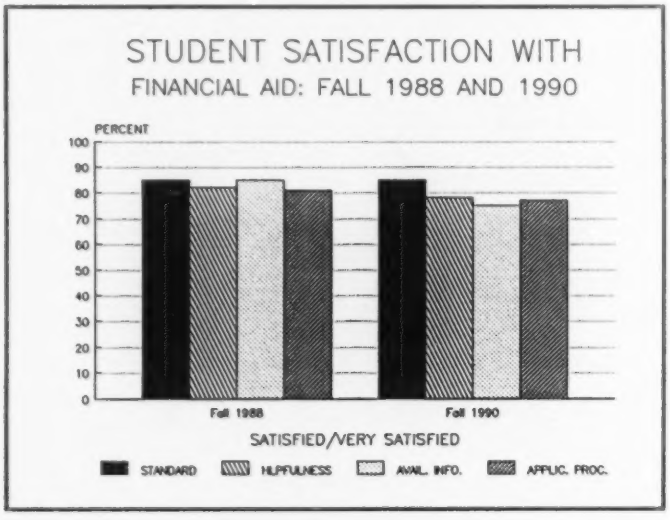
The responses in this section of the survey were also analyzed by sex (male/female), ethnicity (white/non-white), age (under 29/29 and over) and job status (full-time/part-time) to distinguish patterns of satisfaction or dissatisfaction among sub-groups. Of the 120 comparisons that were made, only 16 were significant. Nine of these were comparisons by ethnicity. In all cases the sub-groups differed in their percent of satisfaction five to eight percentage points. Those comparisons that were significant will be reported in the discussion under the appropriate departmental area and only refer to data reviewed from the Fall 1990 survey.

In each of the seven departmental areas, the combined percentages of the "very satisfied" and "satisfied" categories, are compared to a predetermined standard of 85 percent satisfaction. The standard was derived based on a perusal on the current research literature on student satisfaction with services, national finding on a similar survey administered by American College Testing Service, and the recommendation of an external consultant hired to analyze the data from the MTC Fall 1990 Continuing Student Survey.

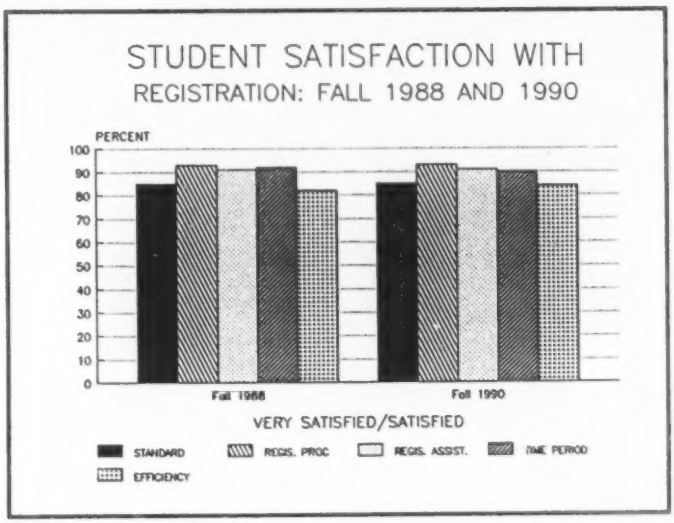
Admissions -- The students appear to be very satisfied with admissions. All the satisfaction ratings for admissions in both years were above 90 percent. Older students (29 years of age and older) reported a lower level of satisfaction (88 percent) with the accuracy of information received before enrolling than did those who were younger (93 percent).



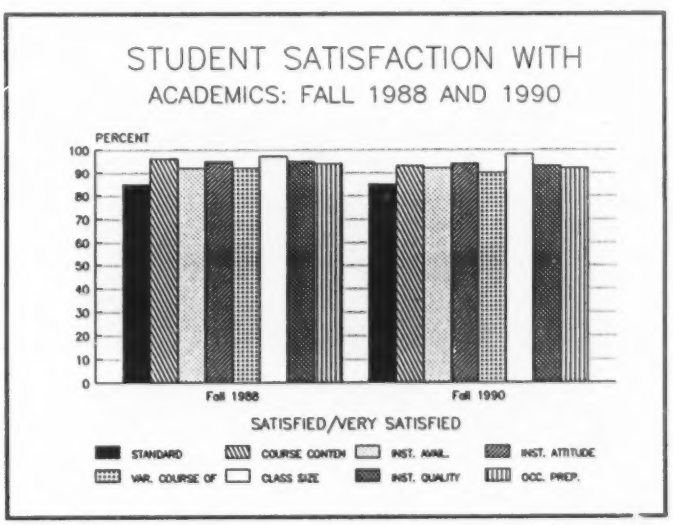
Financial Aid -- Less than half the students responded or had an opinion about financial aid in 1990. Of those responding, only about three-fourths (75 percent to 78 percent) were satisfied with the features listed. This represents a decline of 4 to 10 percentage points from results of the 1988 survey. This area received the lowest percentage of satisfactory ratings from the students. The service experiencing the largest decrease in satisfaction from 1988 to 1990 was "availability of information" (85 percent to 75 percent).



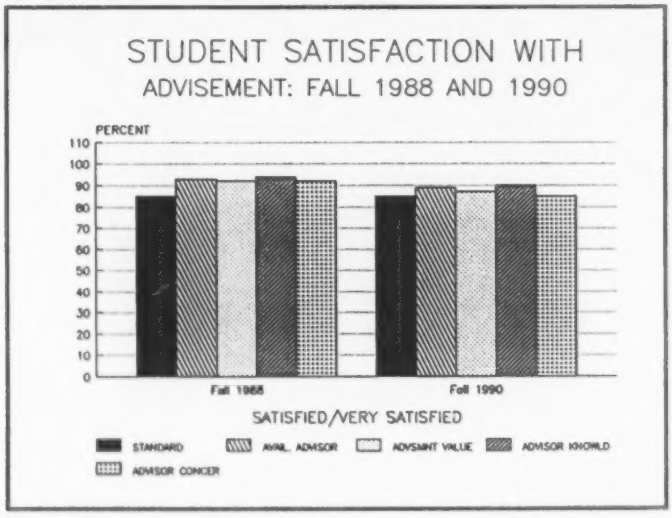
Registration -- A moderately high degree of satisfaction was reported for most features of registration. Information about procedures received the highest marks in 1988 and 1990 (93 percent) and the efficiency and organization of registration received the lowest (82 percent and 84 percent). The efficiency of the registration process was the only area in this category to receive a rating below the 85 percent standard. Further examination of the 1990 data revealed that white students were less satisfied (92 percent) than non-white students (97 percent) with information about procedures. Female (93 percent) and non-white students (95 percent) were more satisfied than male (87 percent) and white students (90 percent) with the assistance they received. Non-white students (91 percent) were also more satisfied with the efficiency of registration than were white students (83 percent).



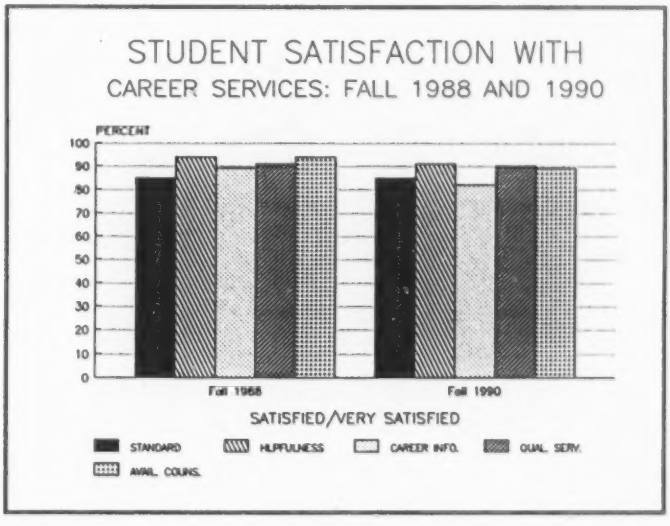
Academics -- Most of the academic services and programs listed on the survey received satisfactory ratings in the 90 percent range. Students are most satisfied (97 percent) with class size. Non-white students (97 percent) were more satisfied than white students (91 percent) and full-time students (96 percent) were more satisfied than part-time students (90 percent) with the course content in the major area of study. Non-white (94 percent) and older students (94 percent) were more satisfied with the variety of courses offered at MTC than were white (89 percent) and younger students (89 percent). White students (92 percent) were also less satisfied with the quality of instruction than were non-white students (97 percent).



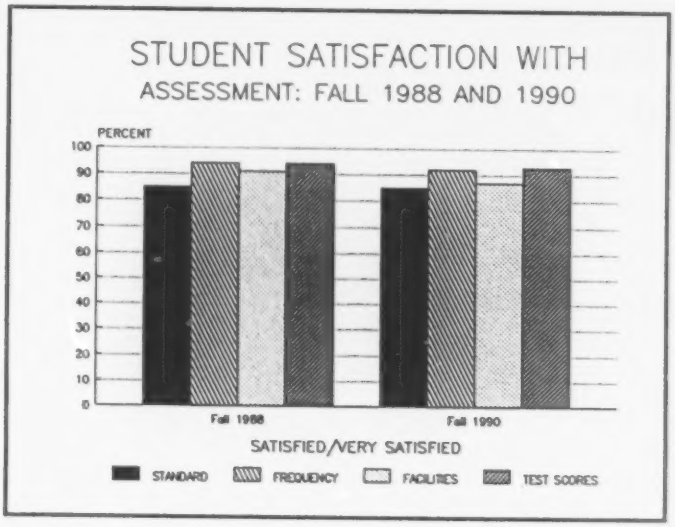
Advisement -- Most of the features of advisement received satisfactory ratings in the high 80 percent range. The advisor's knowledge of program requirements was rated the highest (90 percent) and the advisor's concern with the student's academic progress was rated the lowest (85 percent) in both years of the survey. While the 1990 results exceeded the 85 percent measurement standard, the ratings show a modest decline from the low to mid 90 percent ranges recorded in the 1988 survey. White students were less satisfied with the availability of advisors (88 percent), the value of the advisement information they received (86 percent), and the advisor's knowledge of the program requirements (89 percent) than were the non-white students (96 percent, 94 percent and 96 percent).



Career Services -- Less than half the students responded or had an opinion about career services. The students were more satisfied with the helpfulness of the staff (91 percent) and less satisfied with the information they received about job and career opportunities (82 percent). This category is the only area that failed to meet the targeted standard in 1990 and also career opportunity information experienced the largest decrease in satisfaction (from 89 percent to 82 percent) from 1988 to 1990. Older students were more satisfied (93 percent) than younger students (85 percent) with information about job and career opportunities and the availability of counselors (97 percent and 91 percent).



Assessment -- A little more than half the students responded or had an opinion about assessment. Students were more satisfied with the help they received in interpreting test scores (93 percent) and less satisfied with the testing facilities (87 percent) in Fall 1990. All three of the areas surveyed showed a decline of 1 to 4 percentage points from Fall 1988 responses. Part-time students were more satisfied with the frequency and time of day assessment is offered (96 percent) than were full-time students (90 percent).



APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A
PERCENTAGE OF SATISFACTION WITH MTC SERVICES
FALL 1990

	NUMBER WITH AN OPINION	PERCENT SATISFIED
ADMISSIONS		
Helpfulness of Staff	533	93.8
Entry Procedure	506	92.5
Accuracy of Information	494	90.9
College Catalog	508	96.3
FINANCIAL AID		
Helpfulness of Personnel	230	77.8
Availability of Information	241	75.1
Application Procedures	234	76.5
REGISTRATION		
Information About Procedures	536	92.9
Assistance Received	536	90.9
Length of Registration	523	89.9
Efficiency	521	84.1
ACADEMICS		
Course Content/Major	538	92.9
Availability of Instructors	469	92.1
Attitude of Instructors	555	94.1
Variety of Courses	546	89.7
Class Size	566	97.9
Flexibility of Program Design	495	88.3
Quality of Instruction	531	92.7
Preparation for Career	493	92.3
ADVISEMENT		
Availability of Advisor	500	89.2
Value of Information	495	87.1
Advisor's Knowledge of Program Requirements	516	90.3
Advisor's Concern with Academic Progress	470	84.9
CAREER SERVICES		
Helpfulness of Staff	278	90.6
Information About Job Opportunities	278	81.7
Quality of Services	261	89.7
Availability of Counselor	268	88.8
ASSESSMENT		
Frequency/Time of Day	317	91.5
Facilities	365	86.6
Test Score Interpretation	343	92.7

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
MAR 29 1991